liberalized economic regime, it is the responsibility of the State Government to create an industrial and economic environment conducive to investment and growth of industry in the state. However, the Central Government supplements the efforts of the State Governments through Centrally sponsored schemes such as Growth Centre Scheme, Integrated Infrastructure Development Centre Scheme, Transport Subsidy Scheme and other incentives.

Food Items Exported from NE States

1563. SHRI ONWARD L. NONGTDU: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of quantity of food items exported from NE States during the last three years, item-wise;

(b) the details of incentives being given by Government to exporters for increasing export; and

(c) the steps being taken or proposed to be taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) Central Government maintains the export data for the country as a whole and, not State-wise.

(b) and (c) Some of the steps taken/incentives given to increase export of food items include:—

1. Providing assistance for raising small and large nurseries for production of good quality planting material, upgradation of technical knowhow of farmers through demonstrations, trainings and publicity, rejuvenation of old orchards, area expansion, supply of minikits for vegetables, improving productivity, training of farmers and setting up of model organic farms.
2. Grant of financial assistance for improved packaging, strengthening of quality control and modernization of processing units.
3. Establishment of vapour heat treatment facilities for

eliminating pest incubation in the product especially the mangoes for gaining access to overseas markets.

4. Grant of Air Freight Subsidy for exports of floricultural items and select fresh fruits and vegetables.

5. Arranging promotional campaigns such as buyer-seller meets and participation in important international fairs and exhibitions.

6. Setting up of integrated cargo handling and cold storage facilities at various International Airports for handling export of perishable items such as flowers, fresh fruits and vegetables.

7. Providing assistance in development of data base and dissemination of market information.

8. Providing assistance for setting up of laboratories for testing of products to ensure quality, eliminating contamination & ensuring freedom from fungi and bacteria.

9. Double weightage is provided to the exporters from North Eastern Region for fulfilling export obligations for the purpose of granting the status of Export House, Trading House etc.

10. The minimum export obligation for the units located in Export Promotion Industrial Parks in the North East has been kept at 25% of the production as against 33% which is the norm.

Amendment of Tobacco Board Act

1564. SHRI K.M. SAIFULLAH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to amend the Tobacco Board Act to empower the Board to regulate production of tobacco;

(b) if so, by when a Bill is likely to be introduced; and

(c) the other steps proposed to help the tobacco farmers?